

Message Text

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DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00

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SUBJECT: US STATEMENT ON GREEK/TURKISH DISPUTE IN SECURITY COUNCIL

DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE BENNETT DELIVERED THE
FOLLOWING STAEMENT ON AUGUST 25 DURING THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S
FINAL MEETING ON THIS ITEM:

QUOTE

MR. PRESIDENT,

MY DELEGATION HAS FOLLOWED THE COURSE OF THIS DISCUSSION IN THE
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SECURITY COUNCIL WITH GREAT INTEREST AND SPECIAL CONCERN.

FOR THE UNITED STATES HAS THE CLOSEST OF TIES WITH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY. THEY ARE OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. WE SHARE WITH THEM COMMON PURPOSES BASED UPON COMMON INTERESTS.

ACCORDINGLY, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM ARE OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO US. A PROBLEM SUCH AS THIS -- WHICH LED BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO SEND THEIR DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN MINISTERS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL -- REQUIRES NOT ONLY OUR MOST CAREFUL ATTENTION BUT HAS LED TO MY GOVERNMENT EXERTING ITS BEST EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE PROGRESS TOWARD A RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUES.

WE DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE DEPTH OF FEELING ON BOTH SIDES OR THE COMPLEXITY OF THE LEGAL ISSUES INVOLVED. THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM GO BACK TO CLASSICAL TIMES. THE LEGAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF ARE AMONG THE MOST SENSITIVE IN THE ENTIRE FIELD OF THE LAW OF THE SEA. I DO NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS THE PLACE TO ANALYZE SUCH COMPLEX ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. THIS COUNCIL, INSTEAD, SHOULD DO ALL IT CAN TO ENCOURAGE THE TWO PARTIES TO ENGAGE IN CONTACTS AND DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL ENSURE THAT THE PROBLEM BETWEEN THEM DOES NOT NOW OR AT ANY TIME IN THE FUTURE LEAD TO A THREAT TO THE PEACE OF THE AREA. TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, THIS COUNCIL MUST EXERCISE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE CHARTER IN A WAY THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE.

IN WORKING WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS TO DEVELOP THE RESOLUTION BEFORE YOU, MY DELEGATION HELD THE STRONG VIEW THAT NOTHING WAS TO BE GAINED BY SETTLING ON LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD SIMPLY PROVIDE TEMPORARY SATISFACTION TO ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE PARTIES, BECAUSE INEVITABLY THE RESULT WOULD BE THAT THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM WOULD REMAIN UNAFFECTED. WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS A RESOLUTION WHICH BOTH PARTIES COULD ACCEPT AND UNDER WHICH THEY BOTH COULD WORK TO STRENGTHEN THE PEACE.

MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THIS OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. WE HOPE THE RESOLUTION CAN BE ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS.

DURING RECENT WEEKS AND DAYS, MY GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH BOTH THE GREEK AND TURKISH GOVERNMENTS TO ENCOURAGE ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BOTH SIDES RESTRAINT AND A RENEWED EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT THE LEADERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE SOUGHT TO APPROACH THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH STATESMANSHIP AND MODERATION.

PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS STATED ON AUGUST 9 THAT GREECE IS AVOIDING ANY RESORT TO FORCE AND IS INSTEAD HOPING THAT THE DISPUTE WILL BE RESOLVED BY PEACEFUL PROCEDURES. AT THE SAME TIME

TURKISH LEADERS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE THROUGH NEGOTIATION AND THEY HAVE AFFIRMED THAT THEIR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES ARE NOT INTENDED TO PREJUDICE THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF EITHER GREECE OR TURKEY IN THE AEGEAN.

IN THE COURSE OF OUR CURRENT DEBATE THE DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN MINISTER OF GREECE HAS STATED THAT THERE ARE MANY OPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY GREECE TO TURKEY FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE AND THAT THESE WERE NOT CONFINED ONLY TO THE PROPOSAL THAT THE MATTER BE REFERRED TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE. THE DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN MINISTER OF TURKEY HAS REAFFIRMED THAT TURKEY STANDS READY TO RESOLVE ALL OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES WITH GREECE BY PEACEFUL MEANS AND THAT IT DOES NOT EXCLUDE RECOURSE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE.

THEREFORE, BOTH SIDES HAVE REAFFIRMED TO THIS COUNCIL THEIR WILLINGNESS TO RESOLVE THEIR DISPUTE REGARDING THE CONTINENTAL SHELF OF THE AEGEAN.

WE NOW BELIEVE THAT A FUNDAMENTAL BASIS EXISTS FOR THE KIND OF DISCUSSION AND ADJUDICATION WHICH MUST BE UNDERTAKEN IF A SETTLEMENT IS TO BE ACHIEVED.

IN SUCH A SITUATION, MR. PRESIDENT, I BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE TWO CARDINAL ELEMENTS TO ANY ADVICE WHICH THIS COUNCIL MIGHT GIVE TO GREECE AND TURKEY.

FIRST, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THIS COUNCIL URGE GREECE AND TURKEY TO CONTINUE TO EXERCISE UTMOST RESTRAINT AND AVOID FALLING INTO A PATTERN OF ACTION AND REACTION, THE RESULT OF WHICH WOULD BE AN INCREASING RIGIDITY OF POSITION, THE RAISING OF THE STAKES EACH PARTY CONSIDERS TO BE INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT, AND A CONSEQUENT HEIGHTENING OF TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
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SECOND, BOTH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO PURSUE THE ARRAY OF PROCEDURES WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THIS DISPUTE. FROM WHAT WE HAVE HEARD HERE FROM THE DISTINGUISHED SPOKESMEN OF GREECE AND TURKEY, I THINK IT IS CLEAR THAT BOTH COUNTRIES RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS ONLY THROUGH THE RESUMPTION OF DIRECT AND MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THEM THAT SUCH A SETTLEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED, OR INDEED MUST BE ACHIEVED. FOR OUR PART, THE UNITED STATES STRONGLY FAVORS AND URGES THE EARLIEST RETURN BY THE PARTIES TO SUCH DISCUSSIONS. I BELIEVE IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT BOTH PARTIES RECOGNIZE THE POTENTIALLY VALUABLE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE TO CONSIDER MATTERS WHICH REMAIN UNRESOLVED AFTER NEGOTIATION. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE PARTIES FIND A BASIS THROUGH DIRECT CONTACTS BETWEEN THEM FOR WHATEVER

COMBINATION OF DIRECT TALKS AND SUPPORTING ADJUDICATION THAT
MAY BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT THAT MY
GOVERNMENT IS CONFIDENT BOTH GOVERNMENTS SEEK.

FINALLY, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT ALL OF US ARE ALSO AGREED THAT THE
CONDITIONS FOR PROGRESS TOWARD SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS BETWEEN
GREECE AND TURKEY CAN ONLY FURTHER IMPROVE IF BOTH SIDES AVOID
ANY MILITARY MEASURES WHICH COULD IN ANY WAY BE INTERPRETED AS
THREATENING AND THUS DETRACTING FROM AN ATMOSPHERE OF PEACE
WHICH IS NOW SO ESSENTIAL.

MY DELEGATION HAS SOUGHT TO BEAR THESE CRITERIA IN MIND IN OUR
PARTICIPATION IN THE EFFORTS THAT LED TO THE ELABORATION OF
THE TEXT WE HAVE JOINED IN TABLING. WE BELIEVE THAT TEXT IS
FAIR AND REASONABLE. IT IS INTENDED TO ASSIST IN CREATING
A CONTEXT IN WHICH THE PARTIES CAN SOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. WE
URGE THE PARTIES TO ACCEPT THE COUNCIL'S ADVICE.

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